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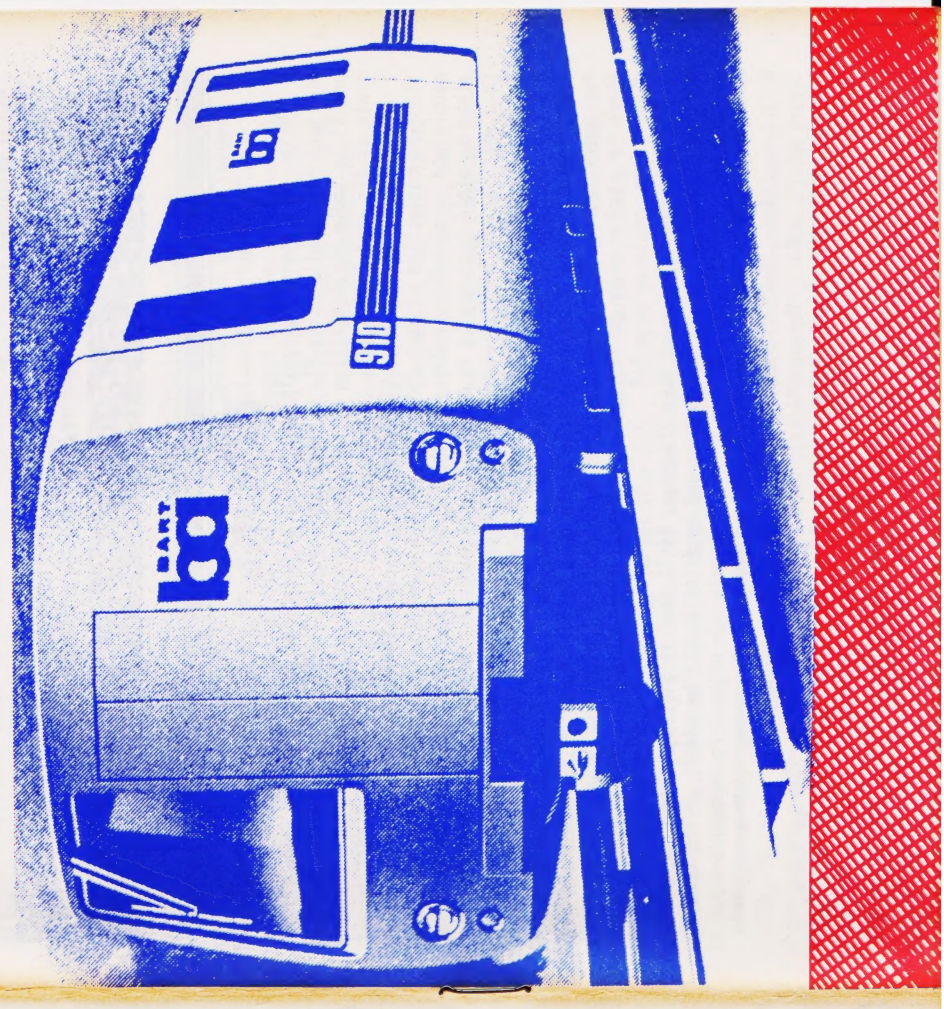
RAIL TRAVEL NEWS



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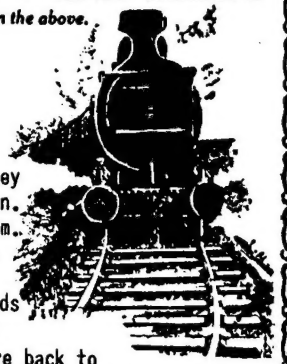

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BOOKS

"Never on Wednesday", subtitled "The First Decade of the RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR", has just been published by PTJ Publishing, Inc. (PO Box 397, Park Forest IL 60466), and it is truly the definitive picture book of the Rio Grande's domeliner--the last train of its kind in America.

Two author-photographers, Richard Loveman and Mel Patrick, have presented here a stunning collection of over 250 black-and-white photographs of the train and its people and surroundings. One gets the impression from this book that there are no other possible pictures to be taken of the train--this book seems to cover it all, in a vast variety of different moods and poses. Besides the scenic shots, there are individual photos of each car and locomotive regularly assigned to the train, there are reproductions of menus and timetables, and there is a map and profile of the famed train's route. But the scenic shots grab one's attention the most. The photo reproduction is extremely high quality--all duotones printed on heavy, glossy stock. There is a color cover photo. And--say, isn't that Julia Child eating lunch in the diner in the photo on page 54?

The softcover version of this 120-page, 8½x11 book is $17.50, while the hardcover edition is $25.00. $1.50 for postage and handling should be added; or the book can be purchased at rail book dealers. This book gets our highest recommendation.

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THE COVER STORY

BART's newly issued annual report, for FY 1979-80, gives us this drawing of a proposed "C" car to add to its fleet of A and B cars. Specifications for the new cars have been drawn up, and they feature a cab with a flat end and an end door, so the cars can be coupled in the middle of trainsets. Thus they combine the elements of both A cars (with a cab) and B cars (no cab, with flat ends for the middle of trainsets). This leads to greater flexibility in forming sets of equipment. BART is seeking a grant from UMTA to cover 80% of the costs of 90 such cars, at about $1 million each. BART said the cars would also have more powerful, redesigned traction motors. BART expects the cars to be rolling in about four years. See "Urban-Suburban Transit" for more BART news.

★AMTRAK BUDGET IN PERIL AS CONGRESS RECESSES

With both houses of Congress away on Easter vacation as we go to press, rail supporters are anxiously awaiting information on how battle lines will be drawn in Congress over the Amtrak budget when lawmakers return later this month. Rail supporters have been asked to contact their Congressmen and Senators in their home districts during the vacation and make known their view on Amtrak.

DOT Secretary Drew Lewis is reported holding tight to his budget-cut plans. "...We are against the idea of running long distance trains," he told a press conference recently, according to the New York Times (Apr 9). He added that he thinks "we should be able to serve a number of corridors, such as the San Diego to Los Angeles route."

National Association of RR Passengers executive director Ross Capon was on a train tour around the country early this month to drum up support for passenger service. Capon told reporters in Oregon that public pressure can get the Reagan Administration to compromise on its stiff Amtrak budget-cutting stance. "Congressmen learn quickly that Amtrak has the nation's biggest lobbying group behind it--the public. And the public, which is being priced out of airline and automobile travel, wants to keep the nation's rail service intact." Capon said "There are no big corporations fighting for it (Amtrak)" and hence the Administration thought that Amtrak would be an easy target for budget-cutting.

RTN hears conflicting assessments of Amtrak's chances from different sources. This is apparently because the battle lines are being formed now, and this is an important period of educating the legislators as to what the public wants, and to the facts about Amtrak's good performance, in contrast to negative assessments that have been spread by the DOT and the White House.

The great majority of newspaper editorials seem to favor keeping Amtrak intact, and we present below a sample of more editorials that have come our way:

*** Sacramento (CA) Bee editorial (Mar 8):

"What must be recognized is that the nation has far more to lose by abandoning rail passenger service than it does by providing adequate federal subsidies."

*** (Portland) Oregon Journal editorial (Mar 27):

"But let the intercity rail system die at this moment from ruthless surgery--and sure as Fate, the gasoline will evaporate and there will be no acceptable way to get from Here to There."

*** Eugene (OR) Register-Guard editorial (Mar 27):

"OK, OK, this is admittedly another one of those cut-the-federal-budget-everywhere-but-here editorials. But cutting the budget of Amtrak, the national railroad passenger service, would be bad policy and not really very economical... Passenger trains do have a place in the nation's transportation future. They've come too far in 10 short years to be put on a sidetrack now."

(continued on page 19)

WHEN THE NEW HAMPSHIRE TRAIN ENDED
by Michael C. Lennon

The passenger service from Boston to Nashua, Merrimack, Manchester and Concord, New Hampshire was terminated on Feb 28. I rode the last trip northbound to Concord, which had on board a large group of railfans from the Boston area. I wish to share my observations on the 13 months of service (from Jan 28, 1980 to Feb 28, 1981).

The service never attracted the 200-300 daily riders it needed to keep it going. Reason? The schedule was very convenient for a day trip to Boston, and the passenger count went up even more if a matinee event was scheduled at the Boston Garden. But let's go back to 1979 and review what happened.

When Hugh Gallen became governor in 1979 he wanted to put rail service back between Boston and Concord NH. Talk became action in Aug 1979 when a test train was run using MBTA equipment (F40 engine and Pullman-Standard push-pull cars). The test run was a success. In early Jan 1980 the governor's office announced that rail service would begin in Mar 1980 with two roundtrips per day to Boston. It was to be an 18-month demonstration project, fully funded by the U.S. DOT. About a week later the Carter Administration realized that the New Hampshire Presidential Primary was less than a month away, and it would be very convenient if the service started on Jan 28 rather than in March. So it was that on Jan 15, 1980 the official announcement came that the service would start on Jan 28.

An inaugural trip for state and local officials and the news media was run on Jan 25. The stop at Nashua was interesting because Budd Company SPV-2000 and the British Leyland Railbus LEV-1 were on display. When the service began the next Monday, the first train equipment was MBTA F40 engine and five push-pull Pullman-Standard coaches. This equipment was used during the entire demonstration program. The second train was the SPV-2000, which ran Concord-Lowell, where an across-the-platform transfer to a connecting train was made in both directions.

At the end of the sixth week the SPV-2000 returned to the Budd Company and was replaced by a 5-car train of Budd RDC cars with a push-pull B&M GP-7 or MBTA FP-10.

The single heaviest day of patronage occurred on May 30, 1980, when about 1000 people used the train--the reason being that the "Tall Ships" were in Boston as part of that city's 350th anniversary celebration. The first train that day had standees leaving Nashua and the second, which I was on, had a full seated load leaving Nashua.

By the end of June, ridership on the second train was low enough (about 80 passengers leaving New Hampshire) that the train was taken off for the summer to stop the cash flow, as expenses were running $7000 per week over estimates. The fares were low compared with competing bus service. For example, from Manchester to Boston on the train was $5 one way, compared with Trailways bus $7.40. Twelve-ride tickets lowered this to $3.33 one way. When September came, the second train stayed off because ridership was down to 125 per day each way, and 80 of those were from Nashua. This average was to remain until the end of service.

Consider the train's competition: In Mar 1980, Northern New England had a major change in its bus service when Trailways of New England, a subsidiary of Continental Trailways, sold off all its routes north of Boston to local operators. In New Hampshire, Concord Coach Lines became Concord Trailways and very aggressively went after the business, starting several 1hr, 15min nonstop trips Concord to Boston daily, along with a 65min nonstop rush hour trip Manchester-Boston. The train's running time Concord to Boston was 1:56, and Manchester-Boston 1:22, which left it out of the competition except between Nashua and Boston, where the train was much faster due to highway conditions. Trombley-Trailways tried to compete with the trains with two rush hour Nashua-Boston trips, but reduced this to one trip after

several weeks due to low patronage. Remember that the B&M tracks between Concord and Lowell run in the Merrimack River Valley and are presently good for 60mph running, but with a lot of slow boards in the cities and towns and even in the best of times of the name trains like the RED WING and ALLOUETTE, Concord-Boston running time was 1:25.

In late September the New Hampshire Transportation Authority announced that the second train would be reinstated with an experimental railbus, to be delivered in October. The British Leyland Railbus LEV-2 (Leyland Experimental Vehicle #2) went on its inaugural test run Oct 30, 1980, with Governor Gallen, state and local officials, FRA, NHTA, MBTA and British Leyland people on board. Regular service didn't start until Dec 1 because of a long testing program to work out technical problems. The railbus is a standard Leyland National double-ended bus body mounted on a Wickham 4-wheel railway undercarriage. I rode on this vehicle on Dec 2, and I must say the British had their act together, as it rode fairly well. The railbus schedule had it running Concord-Lowell one round trip per day, leaving Concord at 8:45am to give people a day of shopping in Boston. The across-the-platform transfer took place at Lowell.

The railbus unfortunately had a short life which ended when it was involved in a grade crossing accident with a car in which two of the three occupants were killed. The four people on board the railbus, two crew and two passengers, were not injured. The railbus was derailed and suffered damage to its pilot and undercarriage. It never ran again in New Hampshire train service, but has been repaired so it could be used elsewhere. Interestingly, the Boston & Maine contracted with the Manchester Transit Authority to run substitute bus service for the railbus, and it operated up to the end of the rail service.

Finally, during the second week of February the governor announced that all rail service to New Hampshire would end Feb 28 because the $3.4 million grant would have run out by that time, and the Reagan Administration would not extend any more funds to run it thru to the scheduled end of the 18-month demonstration period, which would have been Sep 1981. The state of New Hampshire was also in a budget squeeze and didn't have the funds for it either.

The $3.4 million was spent in many ways: First, over $1 million was spent on the track to increase the speed limit from 40 to 60mph. This included lengthening grade crossing circuits. Second, station platforms were built at the four New Hampshire stations where there were none (all had been removed shortly after the B&M service left in 1967). Many people criticize the union for featherbedding, but this was not the case during this demonstration. When the second train was taken off in Jun 1980, crew size was reduced north of Lowell. The 5-car train ran with a 3-man crew to Nashua, then a 2-man crew Nashua-Concord, Monday thru Friday. On weekends a 2-man crew ran the train north of Lowell. However, I did see a third man join the train at Manchester on Saturday when heavy riding occurred. Extra men were also on the train the last day of service, as all five cars were needed to carry the full load of passengers for their last ride.

All in all, it was a very interesting experiment that was ahead of its time in attracting a large, steady ridership.

In the last week of operation, the B&M's Commuter Service Department issued a letter to passengers, stating in part: "While the reasons for this necessary service elimination have already been made known to you by officials of the State of New Hampshire, the Boston and Maine Corporation would like you to be aware of our deep regret due to the termination of your service.

"We have enjoyed the opportunity to provide a convenient, economical and reliable commuter train service to the citizens of New Hampshire and look forward with enthusiasm to resuming this service, should funding circumstances allow at any point in the future... You have our deep appreciation for your loyal patronage of the New Hampshire service over the past year."

★ FRIDAY THE 13th AND BEYOND ON AMTRAK ★

A SUMMARY OF MAJOR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCES ON THE AMTRAK SYSTEM ON FRIDAY, MARCH 13 AND FOR A FEW DAYS AFTER THAT, AS TAKEN FROM OFFICIAL RECORDS

March 13

The CARDINAL was terminated in both directions--train 51 at Charlottesville VA and train 50 at Clifton Forge VA--after vandals released two freight cars from a storage track on the C&O at Staunton VA. Both cars derailed, blocking the single mainline track. Passengers were bused between trains. Train 51 was delayed 217 mins, train 50 57mins.

Ten cars derailed ona MoPac freight at Marshall TX, blocking the single main line track. Train 22, the INTER-AMERICAN, was delayed 200mins detouring over the Cotton Belt line from Big Sandy to Texarkana TX (missing stops at Longview and Marshall, which were serviced by alternate transportation). Track will be restored before train 21 comes thru next morning.

The ICG freight derailment of yesterday in Chicago (see last issue, p. 10) was cleared up by 6:35pm. Train 371, the BLACK HAWK, was delayed 49 mins.

The DESERT WIND, train 35 of Mar 12, struck debris at Layton, Utah, north of Salt Lake City, rupturing the fuel tanks on engines 220 and 526. The engines were removed at Salt Lake, and a UP engine was substituted. It ran without head-end power (no electrical power on the train) to Milford, where train 36 set out engine 319 to provide HEP for no. 35. Then train 36 ran without HEP to Ogden. The UP was repairing engine 220 to put on today's train 35 leaving Salt Lake. Train 35 was delayed 115mins, train 36 65mins.

The PALMETTO, train 89, struck a 12-year old boy trespassing on Pennypacker Undergrad Bridge at Holmes in the NE Corridor. The child was taken to a hospital with head and arm injuries. Train 89 was delayed 35mins, train 105 3mins.

The STATE HOUSE, train 300, hit a grain truck at milepost 69 at Pontiac IL at 8:25am, delaying the train 27mins. The truck driver had minor injuries; there were no injuries on the train.

A Conrail commuter train (#3836) struck and killed a trespasser east of Hudson in the NE Corridor. The train and 6 other CR locals were delayed a short time, as were three Amtrak trains.

The Martinez CA station received a call at 6:12pm PST that there was a bomb on a bridge ahead of the SAN JOAQUIN, train 710. SP police inspected bridges at mileposts 27, 28 and 37.5 and found nothing. The RENO FUN TRAIN and train 710 were held at Martinez, delayed 24mins and 57mins respectively.

The following trains had standees (numbers estimated): 100 on train 174 leaving Baltimore (2 cars added at Philadelphia); 25 on the CRESCENT, train 20 of Mar 12, leaving Philadelphia; 75 on train 169 leaving Philadelphia; 20 on train 19, the CRESCENT, leaving Newark; 20 on train 142 leaving Philadelphia; 75 on train 176 leaving Philadelphia; 150 on train 177 leaving New Haven; 50 on train 182 leaving Philadelphia; 250 on the MONTREALER, train 60, leaving Wilmington (2 cars added at Philadelphia; 30 on the MOUNT RAINIER, train 796, between East Olympia and Tacoma; 210 on the SHAWNEE, train 392, leaving Chicago. Total of standees: 1005.

The COAST STARLIGHT, train 14, was delayed 38mins at Oakland to remove engine 229, which had a malfunctioning compressor.

Not a single failure of on-board equipment was reported today in the system.

March 14

The SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, train 5, was delayed 100mins at Fort Morgan CO when a BN freight derailed one car three miles west of Wiggins CO at 6:05am, blocking the single track. The track was opened at 10:45 with 10mph slow order for 9 miles.

NE Corridor train 112 had an engine failure of unit 904 at Wilmington and was terminated there. 53 passengers were transferred to train 174 and 112's consist was deadheaded to New York.

A Conrail freight with a defective spark arrestor on the diesel started brush fires along the right of way of the New Haven line between Norwalk and Central. Amtrak trains 190, 151, 169, 171, 192, 168, 406, 408 and 410 were delayed for periods of time ranging from 17 to 121mins.

The INTER-AMERICAN, train 21 of the 13th, was delayed 93mins between Ft. Worth and Cleburne on the Santa Fe, due to freight train interference.

A safecracker stole about $800 in cash and some blank tickets from the Hollywood FL Amtrak station during the night.

A robber grabbed $280 in cash from the cash drawer of the West Palm Beach FL Amtrak station. A station employee reportedly recognized the robber.

The following trains had standees today: 70 on train 168 leaving New York; 100 on train 169 leaving New York; 40 on train 341, the KANSAS CITY MULE, leaving Jefferson City; 15 on train 170 leaving Philadelphia. Total # of standees: 255.

Family Days were being held in Portland OR, and excursion trains were run on the UP between Portland and Troutdale.

The CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, train 58 of the 13th, was delayed 44mins between Cairo and Carbondale because of malfunctions in GE diesel 716.

The CRESCENT, train 19, had to have an extra car added at Washington due to heavy patronage, and was running 42mins late.

The INTER-AMERICAN, train 22, was 127mins late at Texarkana due to a variety of reasons: freight interference, servicing the train, cutting off an SP office car (20mins), and slow orders.

The SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 3, was delayed 30mins by the Mississippi River bridge being open for river traffic.

The INTER-AMERICAN, train 23, was delayed 109mins by the connection with train 21 at Temple TX.

Train 82, the SILVER STAR, ran out of some food and beverage items; they will be loaded on in the afternoon tomorrow at Washington.

March 15

The EMPIRE BUILDER (train 8 of Mar 14) was delayed 176mins at Sandpoint ID for a BN freight derailment between there and Libby MT. Derailment occurred at 6pm PST yesterday at Crossport ID, blocking the single track.

Someone shot at train 185 at Iron Hill MD at 1:29pm. A window on car 20676 was shattered. The train was delayed 5mins.

The CITY OF NEW ORLEANS struck and killed a man at Shilo MS at 5:40pm CST. The train was delayed 30mins.

The equipment of train 113, moving in Sunnyside Yard at 2:45am sideswiped some other equipment, causing $3000 damage to Metroliner unit 885 on that train and unit 825 on train 105.

Corridor train 143 hit some debris at milepost 9.5, south of Brill, damaging locomotive 905. Repairs were made at Wilmington, and the train lost 60mins.

When the INTER-AMERICAN, trains 21 and 23 of Mar 14, were separated at Temple TX, train 21 lost head-end power due to a bad cable between cars 2439 & 28303. Train 21 was delayed 63mins.

The PALMETTO, train 90, ran out of ham & cheese, turkey, cheeseburger, and hot dog sandwiches; yogurt and tea bags. They were loaded onto train 89 to transfer to the PALMETTO. The CRESCENT, train 20, was short of cigarettes, Cokes, diet soda, fruit soda, lemonade, granola bars, M&Ms, peanuts, yogurt, and 3 types of sandwiches. The SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, train 6 of Mar 14, had insufficient dry ice loaded at Denver, and Amtrak arranged with BN at Lincoln NE to supply more for diner 38029.

The INTER-AMERICAN, train 22 at Laredo lost time because the fuel truck didn't show up, and the truck servicing the chemical toilets ran out of fuel before it

finished its job. The rest of the toilets were serviced at Ft. Worth. Train was 48mins late at Little Rock due to this and other problems. Train 23 of Mar 14 was 120mins late, and train 24 of this date was 65mins late at Temple due to eight freight train meets and a meet with the eastbound SUNSET.

Amtrak had the following numbers of standees today: 207 on the NIAGARA RAINBOW, train 63, leaving Poughkeepsie; 250 on train 169 leaving Philadelphia; 250 on train 171 leaving New York; 43 on train 168 leaving New Haven; 25 on the CRESCENT, train 19, leaving New York; 150 on train 172 leaving New York; 50 on train 175 leaving Philadelphia; 20 on train 187 leaving Philadelphia; 50 on train 60, the MONTREALER, leaving Philadelphia; 35 on the HOOSIER STATE, train 318, leaving Chicago; 31 on train 581, the SAN DIEGAN, leaving Oceanside; 20 on the NORTH STAR, train 10, leaving Sandstone MN. Total number of standees: 1131.

Special trains: The Safety Patrol Special returned Washington to West Palm Beach; 6 Family Day excursions were run Portland-Troutdale OR and return.

Train 576, a SAN DIEGAN, was 49mins late at Redondo due to a malfunctioning speed recorder on engine 214; engine 223 was substituted.

The ADIRONDACK, train 68, was 24mins late at Albany due to HEP cable problems.

Train 64, the NIAGARA RAINBOW, lost 16mins at Albany due to loose brake discs on cars 20207 & 21160; cars 21065 & 20125 were substituted; 25mins were lost by Poughkeepsie due to a parted air hose on car 20125; at Ossining 2mins more were lost with problems with engine 486. The same engine acted up also on train 73, the EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS, causing 45mins delay.

The LAKE CITIES, train 352, lost 21mins at Mattawan when Turboliner unit 61 had a broken air line.

The EMPIRE BUILDER, train 8 of Mar 14, had problems with four Superliner cars: #31047--a/c & ventilation failure in entire car; #32021--bad end doors; #38032--refrigeration units and right dumbwaiter malfunctioning; #32003--A/C & ventilation failure, and loose upper berth in bedroom B.

March 16

Due to SEPTA pickets at Philadelphia Suburban Station, the following Amtrak trains were affected: train 471 ran from Suburban Station to Wilmington with Supervisory Personnel operating, and a new crew was put on at Wilmington. It left Philadelphia 83mins late. Train 603 was annulled. Trains 600, 602 and 604 were terminated at 30th St Station. Train 605 originated at 30th St, using equipment from #600, leaving 9mins late. Train 607 originated at 30th St with equipment from #602, leaving 20mins late. SEPTA pickets left Suburban Station at 8:12am.

The LAKE SHORE LIMITED, train 49 of Mar 15, was delayed 224mins by partial head end power failure. Passengers were moved to the three front cars, which still had power. Complimentary breakfasts were boarded at Toledo. The train missed the connection with train 353 at Toledo, and a chartered bus took connecting passengers from the LAKE SHORE at Toledo to Detroit.

Vandals placed railroad ties on the tracks at Kewanee IL, and the ILLINOIS ZEPHYR, train 347, struck them at 7:55pm, at milepost 130.9. 56mins were lost at Kewanee in inspecting the train and connecting parted air hoses. It ran the rest of the route at 50mph due to suspected flat wheels on the train.

Two trees down on the BN's Pacific Division caused CTC failure at 6:33pm PST (restored 9:45pm). The MOUNT RAINIER, train 797, was delayed 72mins, and train 25 of the 15th, the PIONEER, was delayed 14mins.

A total signal and switch power failure occurred at 4:45pm at Spring Tower on the Boston Division of the NE Corridor. The following trains were delayed in times ranging from 3 to 36mins: 417, 419, 60, 421, 416, 418, 142, 420, 422, 423.

The COLONIAL, train 174, ran out of food leaving North Philadelphia. Loaded onto the train later were 60 Danish pastries, 48 orange juice, 24 milk, and 48 sausage & biscuits.

The BIG APPLE, train 44, was without food service because the train attendant

was not awakened by his motel, and he missed the train. He had the liquor with him, and carried it into New York on a later train.

The following numbers of standees were noted: 14 on train 710, the SAN JOAQUIN, between Riverbank and Fresno; 17 on train 223 and 71 on train 225, both between Newark and Princeton Junction. Total of standees: 102.

A bus was chartered to carry the Chicago Symphony Chicago-Milwaukee and return.

Commuter train 322, the CALUMET, was delayed 44mins at Chicago when car 9613 had mechanical problems. The equipment of train 324 was substituted.

The MOUNT RAINIER, train 796, had 13 cars and 2 engines from the weekend's Family Days added at Portland. Engine 218 acted up, and the remaining 2 engines could not handle the load. 30mins were lost.

No on-board equipment failures were reported today in the Amtrak system.

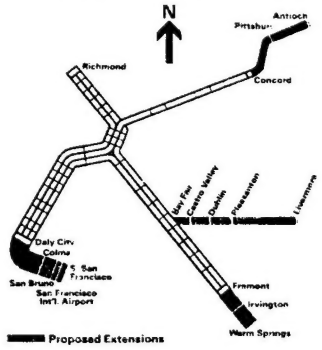
The MONTREALER was running 29mins late at Springfield, from a variety of small delays, 14mins of them due to slow orders.

The NIGHT OWL, train 67, was 34mins late at New York, mostly due to a switch failure at New Haven.

The SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, train 6, lost 52mins at Sparks NV when one car was removed and engine 685 added.

The INTER-AMERICAN, train 22, was 82mins late at Little Rock due to a variety of railroad operating reasons. It had been as late as 105mins shortly after Ft. Worth. Train 21 was on time at Pine Bluff! Train 23 of yesterday was 100mins late at Houston; reasons: 44mins due to connection at Temple, 5 freight meets and one with the westbound SUNSET. Train 24 was 51mins late at Temple due to 4 freight meets, MofW work and miscellaneous.

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT



BART IS EYEING the extensions of its lines to outlying regions, as shown by the black lines on the adjoining map. One such, the Livermore line, would be a totally new line. This expansion is a program recently adopted by the BART Board for enactment by the end of this century, in phases. BART estimates the cost of these four extensions at $1.7 billion in 1980 dollars. In other BART news, the system had its highest Monday ridership ever on Apr 6, when 171,145 passengers were counted. BART has not had a major service disruption since December, when two computers failed.

A GENERATOR BREAKDOWN at the Cos Cob power station in Greenwich CT on Apr 3 is causing trains on Conrail's New Haven commuter line to conserve power at rush hours by cutting speed in half (from 60 to 30 or 40mph), letting trains coast at times, and by leaving all heat, air conditioning and lights other than auxiliary lights off. This situation is reported to continue "indefinitely", according to the NY Times.

NEW YORK CITY'S transit situation is becoming desperate. A city official on Apr 5 stated that a transit fare increase in July is "inevitable." A number of studies have been made showing that deteriorating transit in the city is affecting commerce and employment there. Transit officials blame their predicament on lack of money during New York's fiscal crisis a few years ago. A group of businessmen has volunteered to help the MTA operate more efficiently. The Mayor and the Governor are battling over state funding for New York transit.

DOT SECRETARY LEWIS recently said he would honor funding commitments to the following transit systems under construction: Washington DC, Miami, Baltimore, Atlanta and Buffalo. Other systems that are in more preliminary stages may be out in the

(continued on page 19)

RAIL CANADA

VIA RAIL CANADA plans to increase fares 5% after May 1. On Apr 1 the corporation announced that it had filed its plans with the CTC. VIA said the increase is due to increased labour and materiel costs. Other changes in VIA's fare structure include a reduction from 30 to 14 days before travel in the booking requirements for money-saving APEX fares; and an extension of the application period for APEX fares so the return portion of an APEX journey can now be taken up to May 31 or after Sep 30 (previously they applied only until May 15).

MONTREAL-QUEBEC RAPIDO struck a truck-trailer loaded with lumber at a crossing on CN's St. Hyacinthe Subdivision in Quebec province. The truck driver was killed and nine other persons were injured, including three passengers. The CTC said it will investigate the accident. VIA locomotive 6516 was heavily damaged.

VIA RAIL CANADA'S Frank Roberts will address the National Association of RR Passengers Board meeting on May 1 in Washington DC. Transport 2000 Canada will attend.

BRITISH COLUMBIA RAILWAY will receive $4 million from the B.C. government, with $3 million going to renovation of the railway's RDC cars and $1 for operating subsidy. Reports said that full service restoration will take place Jun 1. Transport 2000 Canada is pushing for an earlier date, however. Transport 2000 B.C. may be contacted at 4826 12A Avenue, Delta, B.C. V4M 2B5.

THE ONTARIO MINISTRY of Transport and Communications has offered to pay 90% of the cost of a trolley bus line from Billings Bridge up Bank Street and down Rideau Street to the St-Laurent Plaza, near the Ottawa station. Cost of the new installation will be $15.5 million.

BRITISH COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT lost $5 million last year by retiring the "Princess Marguerite" from the Victoria-Seattle run (the ship is back this year), and it lost $1 million more on the hydrofoil operation that partially replaced the ship. These official figures were released in late March.

BOMBARDIER HAS RECEIVED an order for 10 locomotives for the 3-foot gauge Guatemalan Railways. The units will be delivered in spring and summer of 1982.

FORMER CANADIAN NATIONAL Alaska cruise steamer "Prince George" was moved from Esquimalt to North Vancouver in mid-Feb for a 2-month refit in preparation for a return to service under the flag of Canadian Cruise Lines. The ship was bought for $500,000 by 20 Victoria businessmen, and will get a $4 million overhaul before entering service May 25. She will make 22 weekly departures, each Mon evening thru Oct 5. Collect calls for reservations are taken at (604) 386-3844. The ship was retired by CN in early 1975.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAIL accepts collect calls at (604) 665-2507 for "Princess Patricia" cruises to Alaska. The ship sails Mondays May 11-Oct 5. CP officials continue to mull the ship's future.

THE END OF "Princess of Vancouver" service set by CP for May 30 would mark the end of downtown-to-downtown service between Vancouver and Nanaimo, B.C. Passenger and auto service ended last Oct as CP moved to cut crew size.

In the photo at right, the "Prince George" (left) and the "Princess Marguerite" are moored together in Victoria in 1975, as the "George" was going into retirement. Glenn Lee photo.

THE STARTUP OF the MAPLE LEAF between Toronto and New York on Apr 26 marks the first time VIA and Amtrak have jointly operated a train. In Canada, as far as Niagara Falls, Ontario, the train will be operated and staffed by VIA personnel, and Amtrak crews will take over at that point (see page 17 for schedule). VIA said the one-way fare Toronto-NY will be $74 Canadian, with a 30-day round trip excursion fare available for $105 Canadian.

CALGARY-EDMONTON DAYLINER decision: on Apr 1 the CTC's Saskatoon office ordered improvements to this VIA (CPRail) service. All runs must be 7 days a week, with 4 stops added. Shelters are to be upgraded, snack bar service added, bar service added if the provincial government approves, and promotion must include displays of the upgraded RDC equipment--all by this fall. A one-year trial period will begin when these improvements have been made, at the end of which time either there will have been an increase in passenger loadings, or a Federal-provincial agreement which could include funding. In either case, service is to be retained. The following improvements are also mandated: new signals, speed increase, frequency of service increase. LRC potential is claimed for the line. In addition, VIA bus must connect the South Edmonton CP station with the centre town CN station, and railways must preserve rail access to the CN station.

CANADIAN TRANSPORT COMMISSION announced Apr 6 that it will conduct an inquiry into the possible ways and means of making the CN Roadcruiser bus service in Newfoundland accessible to disabled travelers.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"'Lies' about Amtrak: Debating the future of Amtrak is an honest political undertaking, whether in the halls of congress, or on the editorial pages. But the debate should stick to the facts.

"One of the more prominent examples of falsehoods now being slung at Amtrak was a Wall Street Journal editorial suggesting that taxpayers didn't need 'empty' Amtrak trains rolling around the American west any longer. Rail Travel News called the Journal's attacks 'lies.' Other Amtrak supporters have been equally as dour as the Reagan Administration proceeds with its highly questionable attacks on the Amtrak system.

"The fact is that all of Amtrak's western trains are well patronized. The most highly patronized Amtrak run anywhere in the United States is the Seattle-Los Angeles COAST STARLIGHT service. The San Diego-Los Angeles SAN DIEGAN runs are the most heavily patronized short-distance Amtrak runs outside of the New York city area.

"Our east-west EMPIRE BUILDER runs have been averaging 200 or more passengers per trip. The loads would be even higher if the EMPIRE BUILDER operated on the more heavily populated ex-Northern Pacific line in Southern Montana via Billings and Butte.

"Reagan's budgeteers already have admitted in committee hearings in Washington, D.C., that their proposed Amtrak cuts have been made without consideration that the nation could be hit by additional oil shortages, which Sen. Henry Jackson has suggested are almost 'certain.' It also is clear that Amtrak's enemies have not considered that many communities served by Amtrak, such as those in Montana, have no alternate public transportation.

"There is no east-west bus service on some parts of Highway 2, for example, and airports for some communities served by Amtrak are 100 miles or more distant.

"Congressmen should not be stampeded by inaccurate and unreliable statements about Amtrak."

--Editorial in Tri-City Herald (Kennewick WA), Apr 3.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"Specifically, Peter Pan Bus Lines will haul passengers between Westfield, Mass., to Albany, N.Y., Adirondack Trailways will conduct service between Albany and Syracuse, Empire Trailways will pick up the route between Syracuse and Erie, Pa., and Lake Front Trailways will serve between Erie and Cleveland. Each of the carriers will contribute to a pool of buses used to operate the schedules. Individual passengers will be able to travel between any two points along the route without having to change trains or stations."

--Daily Traffic World, Mar 16.

(How's that again?)

RIDING THE TWO ZEPHYRS by Walt Stringer

Amtrak's SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR and the Rio Grande's RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR present quite a contrast these days--Amtrak representing the finest in new American luxury equipment and Rio Grande operating a vintage domeliner in the grand tradition.

My Denver to San Francisco trip began March 19 at Denver aboard DRGW #17. Business improved last year on the RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR--there was a 5% increase in patronage, losses dropped to $1.5 million, and new tariff provisions with Amtrak were instituted. For instance, if you ride between a point east of Denver and one west of Salt Lake or Ogden, you may use either Amtrak or the DRGW between Denver and Salt Lake at your discretion (normally, DRGW costs more than Amtrak). The only speculation I heard about the RGZ's fate was that, if the Amtrak connections at the west end are discontinued, the RGZ might follow suit.

As to equipment, the UP diner purchased by the DRGW is still being rebuilt in Burnham, and, if money is budgeted, "Silver Shop" will be refurbished. DRGW also has four stainless steel cars of unknown origin at Burnham, which are being stripped for parts.

The RGZ this crisp but mild Thursday morning consisted of engines 5771, 5763, steam generator 252, engine 5762, cars 1230 combine, "Silver Banquet" diner, dome coach "Silver Colt", coach "Silver Aspen", dome coach "Silver Bronco", and dome lounge observation "Silver Sky". "Silver Banquet" is no longer positioned ahead of "Silver Sky" because all the traffic thru the diner to "Silver Sky" was interfering with the dining service--people bumping waiters, falling onto tables, etc.

About 130 people boarded at Denver --mostly Coloradans heading west to Glenwood Springs or Grand Junction, a few to Utah. The domes were full upon departure, and breakfast was served until nearly 10am.

The trip to Salt Lake was typical Rio Grande--an unobtrusive crew, beautiful scenery, a few slow orders and meets but nothing bothersome. We arrived at Salt Lake 10mins early, but were as late as 20mins passing Green River. Everyone seemed glad to be aboard, and several travelers noted that they deliberately went out of their way (from both Amtrak and Greyhound) to ride the train. In terms of patronage, Glenwood Springs saw 60 off and 15 on, Grand Junction 30 off and 10 on, and all other stations just a few on and off.

The dining car service was excellent (current menus were issued last October). For breakfast I had French toast, bacon and hot chocolate for $4.40, lunch was turkey on toast, iced tea for $4.50, and dinner was soup, liver, potato, beans, a roll, milk and pie a la mode for $9.50 (prices include tip). There were two waiters and a "working" steward, and they left everyone happy.

The only problem I encountered was with the crew from Denver to Grand Junction. They declined to adjust the climate control in the cars, and every car became hot by early afternoon. The Grand Junction crew quickly adjusted things, however.

My greatest enjoyment was solitude --for several hours in late afternoon and evening I was alone in "Silver Sky" enjoying the railfan's dilemma of whether to use the dome or the rear-facing couch in the observation. A combination of both was the only possible compromise. Riding over Soldier Summit in a snow shower, it was really a thrill upstairs watching the signals and the snowflakes, downstairs watching the rails and the packed powder.

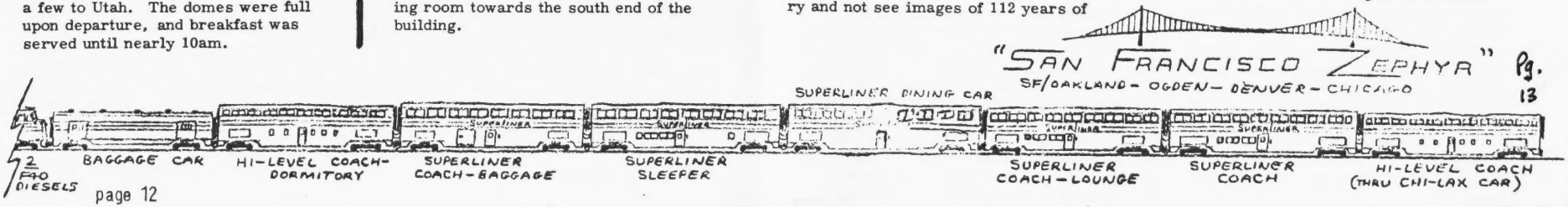
I was surprised to find, upon arrival in Salt Lake, that the main waiting room is closed for repairs, and DRGW has created a pleasant, if small, waiting room towards the south end of the building.

View from the dome: Eastbound RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR meets a freight in the snows of Utah. RTN photo. (Below:) Railfan Daniel Kuhn has drawn examples of consists of the three Amtrak trains in Utah--the SFZ, DESERT WIND and PIONEER. Below is seen the SFZ equipment as of Jan 1, before introduction of Sightseer lounge car. His flyer is handed out at the Salt Lake City Amtrak station.

Friday and Saturday were spent in Salt Lake on business and pleasure. Saturday I drove out to Promontory Point to see the Golden Spike National Monument. The area is open every day of the year; however, the re-creation of the event, complete with engines, is held only May thru October. I was the only guest that morning, and I rather enjoyed the solitude of the high desert locale. Standing at the spot where the spike was driven, looking east and west on thin strands of iron, I had a startling realization--a place like Promontory not only recreates a historical event, but also gives each of us a chance to feel and experience the meaning of it. Who can stand at Promontory and not see images of 112 years of men and trains and locomotives. I also felt a perspective of the two ZEPHYRS --and a reassurance that, for all the problems plaguing rail carriers, they are incredibly enduring.

Leaving Promontory, I drove to Park City, via Weber Canyon and Echo Junction, following the UP main line east from Ogden. Just east of Devil's Slide I noted a sign beside the tracks. It said "Site of the 1000-Mile Tree", dated 1869. At Park City I saw quite a collection of private passenger cars, including Amtrak 2782 "Duval County", 9202 "Sunlight Dome", UP coach 5365, and Milwaukee coaches 603 and 624.

Saturday night it was time to head for home. I was riding the PIONEER



Westbound SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, with its full consist of Superliner cars, pulls into Martinez, California. RTN photo.

to Ogden, and then a first: my first sleeper on a Superliner, from Ogden to San Francisco on train 5, the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR.

The PIONEER at Salt Lake consisted of engine 217, cars 1249 2913 "Pacific Garden", 20212 Amdinette, coaches 21840 and 21868, and deadhead coach 21197. The UP (Amtrak) depot was magnificant--clean, well-lighted, the Golden Spike murals shining on the walls. About 50 people boarded--many unable to buy tickets because the agent shut the window at 10pm to help get the baggage on the train. The young UP conductor sold a lot of cash fares on the way to Ogden.

We pulled into Ogden on track 2 and found the DESERT WIND on track 1 and train 5, the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR on track 3. Amtrak has installed orange sodium lights over the platforms and transferring between trains poses no hazard.

Train 5 had arrived on time and had F40 locomotives 310 and 357, and cars 1266, 1162, 39915, 32016, 32038, 31009, 38018, 33007, 34024, 34008, and 31045--that's two sleepers, diner, Sightseer lounge and coaches. I had room 6, an upper-level accommodation towards the front of car 32016.

Problems were apparent as I arrived. At least two workmen were under my sleeping car and several elderly ladies were after the attendant. The car had no available water, which meant that the four public toilets in the car had no use, and riders had to use another car. The problem was fixed at Ogden (presumably because the train was watered), but two toilets remained out of order for other reasons.

Room 6 was quite interesting. The bed was made up forwards (in every other sleeper I've had, beds were made so your head was away from the direction of movement). There was an upper berth (retracted) and a lower, down and ready made. The decor was orange-gray, the window clean. Of course, there was no toilet or basin, but here's what my room did offer: a lockable door, curtained window into aisle, air intake (direction adjustable), three reading lights, ceiling light, night light, movable tray, coat closet, speaker, volume and channel selector, and electric outlet--and all of the above were well labelled, organized where appropriate, and worked as intended. Great, I thought.

Then, we started moving. Bang, thud, shudder--on every rough joint. This Superliner car, evidently one on which the trucks had not yet been reworked, was an excellent conductor of noise and impact. After a while it settled down, but the ride was rough and noisy and even the advantage of height didn't seem to help. A quick walk showed that the sleepers were full and coaches nearly so, but the lounge was empty (since Utah is a "dry" state).

I awoke in Lovelock, Nevada at 6:00 am, after a pretty good sleep. To find out what the term "dead town" means, try Lovelock on a cloudy Sunday at dawn. Shortly after, the P.A. system chimed on--please have your breakfast now, because we're boarding 500 people at Reno. A very considerate steward there. Ultimately we got 250 at Reno, and breakfast was served for five hours--until 11:30am! I ordered pancakes and coffee for $3. Service was good.

After two freight delays and sitting outside Sparks while our engineer and the yardmaster had a radio discussion of crossing over, current of traffic, verbal clearances and various sections of the rulebook, we arrived Sparks at 7:55am--20mins late. An SP engine put three more coaches on the rear--cars 34063, 31014 and 34098--and an SP SD40T2 Tunnel Motor went on the point. Nearby was the RENO FUN TRAIN, enjoying another moderately successful season.

After servicing and a crew change we left Sparks at 8:20am. Somehow it took 13mins to get to Reno. The crowd boarded and we left at 8:40, 30mins late. I occupied a lounge seat. There was good visibility except when the bar line blocked the aisle and thus the view to the opposite side of the car. A group of travel agents on a Superliner familiarization trip were all responding positively and our Reno to S.F. service supervisor was doing his job nicely. From Reno to Oakland the train was jammed and rowdy, and both upper and lower cafe bars were open.

Clouds and snow obscured much of the Sierra, but we did use the no. 1 track over Donner Summit rather than the no. 2 track thru the "Big Hole" under the mountain. As we traveled along the P.A. blared often with diner calls (a number system is used).

We left Sacramento at 1:25 and the sun was out again, shining on the Golden State's new railroad museum, soon to open. We passed the eastbound SF ZEPHYR west of Suisin-Fairfield as I was in the diner attempting to order lunch. The diner crew, after surviving breakfast, decided to retaliate against latecomers to lunch. Service was spotty, and rumors flew about the car as to what the pantry still held. Finally, it became known that there was no hot food or water (at all), so that left soup and sandwich, with canned soft drinks from the next car, our only choice.

Most conversations I overheard were positive about the Superliners, and about Amtrak besides, and those travel agents will undoubtedly do some good too. Arrival at Oakland was 15 mins early, thanks to padding.

What does a ride on the two ZEPHYRS offer?--the best of the past, and a pretty good present. Which do I prefer? Well, I've got both, and may the current Administration not change that. The next time you ride from Denver to the Coast, compare the trains--and then remember Promontory and how far we've come.

Author Walt Stringer is a transplanted Pennsylvanian who is now working on the San Diego Trolley.

INCIDENT AT SCHRIEVER, LOUISIANA
by Jim Selzer

On Tuesday, Mar 3, Mardi Gras Day, a friend and I boarded the SUNSET LIMITED, train 2, at Schriever LA to ride to New Orleans. The trip was not uneventful--typically Southern Pacific.

SP engine 3301, a GP unit, was switching in the yard at the time, and began shoving a 16-car cut in the yard to the west. The lead seven cars, heavily loaded with bentonite (used in oil well drilling), separated from the rest of the train--a knuckle had broken. The crew didn't realize the seven cars had separated--it was dark now--but suddenly they did notice the flashing lights and gates activated at the west end of the yard. Immediately thereafter, the approach lighted block signals came on. West of Shriever there are three sets of signals visible, and all three were green. Then the nearest one went red. No doubt about it, the cars were rolling out of control to the west, now on the main line!

While the yard engine chased the cars down the single track main line, the operator at Shriever called the agency office at Morgan City LA to warn the east-

bound SUNSET LIMITED of the runaway cars. (The track west of Shriever is downgrade for three to four miles.) The Shriever operator was told that train 2 could not be warned, as that train had already passed Morgan City.

Before a collision between the SUNSET and the runaway freight cars could occur, however, the switch engine crew had caught the cars and had secured them. But the problem now was that no eastbound train could proceed until track crews could make repairs. Our SUNSET arrived at the split switch just behind switch engine 3301 and its seven runaways, where it was delayed from 7:11 to 7:26pm. The switch was quickly given a temporary repair, enough so two trains could proceed east.

The SUNSET departed Shriever at 7:30pm and arrived New Orleans track 4 at 8:50 pm, or just five minutes late. All in all, the situation was well-handled. The yard crew responded rapidly to a potentially dangerous situation. The operator was able to establish radio contact with train 2 and advise of the status of the incident. Consist of the SUNSET was: engines 702, 707 (P30s); cars Superliner 31007, Hi-level 39962, Superliners 34090, 38010, 32031 and 32001.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

APRIL FOOL TRICKS: An Eastern railfan publication in its April issue published a number of fictitious rail news reports that were so well written that evidently many people were fooled and didn't notice the disclaimer in the back of the newsletter that all were jokes. The B&O Railroad Museum on Apr 13 put out a formal press release stating that the report that its prized "Tom Thumb" locomotive is currently traveling to California under its own steam to participate in the State Railroad Museum opening on May 2 is "totally fictitious." The "Tom Thumb", built in 1927 as a replica of the original 1830 locomotive, is indeed coming to California, but inside a specially-fitted boxcar in regular freight service, the B&O Museum said. Museum curator Franklyn Carr said the 3400-mile trip is "theoretically possible", but the little locomotive, with a top speed of 11mph "should have left Baltimore on Christmas Eve." And RTN was taken in by the item on the fancied 4449 runs on the BN, and passed it on to RTN readers (last issue, p. 18). The 4449 will NOT run on the BN after it returns to Portland May 16. The newsletter editor sent out a letter of apology on Apr 4: "what I failed to consider were those few influential readers who are 'skimmers' and may have missed the disclaimer altogether".....

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UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD will ferry its two steam locomotives, the 8444 and the Challenger, to Sacramento for the Museum opening, in freight service, but they will run doubleheaded from Green River WY to Ogden UT on Apr 24, pulling a short train of invited press members. From Ogden to Sacramento they will be hauled in an SP freight train.....

THE ANN RUTLEDGE, train 301, was on Apr 13 reported standing at Sedalia MO due to engine failure. A MoPac freight engine was being added to pull the train to Kansas City. It cannot be repaired there, so train 304 of the 13th was being cancalled between Kansas City and St. Louis. The equipment will deadhead back to St. Louis after midnight and buses will run to replace #304 the morning of the 14th. On the 14th, #301 will have an extra engine to cut off at St. Louis, and train 304 will originate at St. Louis. The stalled train arrived Kansas City 1hr, 55mins late with this consist: MoPac GP 1571, Amtrak 242 (F40); cars 20231 diner, coaches 21870, 21849, 21229.....

CITIZENS FOR RAIL CALIFORNIA will have its annual meeting in San Bernardino the weekend of Apr 24-25. Amtrak said it will display several Superliner cars there, at the Amtrak station (noon-4 Saturday, 10am-4pm Sunday) for public viewing.

Amtrak said that as of Apr 15 it had received all but 22 sleeping cars of the full 284-car Superliner order.....

"THE DAWN OF a New Decade" is how Amtrak characterizes its Tenth Anniversary, coming up on May 1. Its new systemwide timetable, effective Apr 26, arrived here shortly before we went to press, and the cover design, appearing on a rich blue background, is shown at left. The new schedules are effective thru Oct 24, except that Northeast Corridor schedules are good thru Aug 1. Most of the schedule and service changes for Amtrak's 10th Anniversary timetable have already been given in our last two issues. Amtrak sums up what's new this spring on page 2 of the timetable: the MAPLE LEAF, the thru New York-Toronto train, is introduced; New York's Empire Service gets more convenient schedules and an additional NY-Niagara Falls roundtrip; SILVER METEOR gets rebuilt Heritage Fleet cars and a shorter schedule; the CARDINAL is extended to New York (thru coach service NY-Charleston, and West Virginia-Cincinnati-Chicago is now available); a third roundtrip, the FORT PITT, is introduced between Altoona and Pittsburgh; the PRAIRIE MARKSMAN and the ILLINI will have later Sunday departure times; new station service starts at Michigan City IN, Cache Junction UT and Cascade Locks OR; and the PIONEER goes Superliner, with a thru Superliner coach Chicago-Seattle. (And Amtrak's summary didn't mention that the COAST STARLIGHT gets a 52-minute faster running time.) The schedule of the new MAPLE LEAF is shown at the right. Footnote R means it stops only to receive passengers, and D means it stops only to discharge them. The MAPLE LEAF is an Amfleet train, with its first run set for Apr 26. It marks the first time a train service has been offered jointly between Amtrak and VIA Rail Canada. The new timetable is printed in an edition of 740,000 (the Feb edition had 500,000). Let's hope that the "Dawn of a New Decade" isn't for a decade of shrinking rail service.....

READ DOWN					READ UP
63			Train Number		64
Daily			Frequency of Operation		Daily
⊠ ⊞			Type of Service		⊠ ⊞
	Km	Mi	*(Conrail)*		
			New York, NY		
8 45A	0	0	Dp *-Grand Central Terminal (ET)* Ar		8 50P
R 9 28A	54	33	Croton-Harmon, NY		D 7 59P
R 10 16A	118	74	Poughkeepsie, NY *(Highland)*		D 7 11P
10 30A	144	89	Rhinecliff, NY *(Kingston)*		6 54P
10 55A	184	114	Hudson, NY		6 33P
11 22A	229	142	Ar **Albany-Rensselaer, NY** Dp		6 05P
11 37A	229	142	Dp Ar		5 50P
12 04P	258	160	Schenectady, NY		5 28P
12 22P	286	178	Amsterdam, NY ⊕		5 10P
1 23P	382	238	Utica, NY		4 09P
1 39P	404	251	Rome, NY ⊕ *(Griffiss AFB)*		3 53P
2 11P	459	286	**Syracuse, NY**		3 19P
3 37P	597	371	**Rochester, NY**		1 52P
4 40P	693	431	**Buffalo, NY** *-Depew Sta.*		12 50P
5 02P	706	439	**Buffalo, NY** *-Exchange St. Sta.*		12 33P
5 50P	745	463	**Niagara Falls, NY**		11 50A
88-88			*(VIA Rail Canada Inc.)*		87-88
6 35P	747	464	Niagara Falls, ONT.		11 10A
6 55P	765	475	St. Catherines, ONT.		10 36A
7 11P	790	491	Grimsby, ONT. •		10 18A
7 37P	816	507	**Hamilton, ONT.**		9 57A
7 49P	828	514	Burlington West, ONT.		9 42A
8 00P	845	525	Oakville, ONT.		9 31A
8 30P	879	546	Ar **Toronto, ONT.** *(ET)* Dp		9 05A

THE CIRCUS TRAIN of Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey now has to pass over the Hellgate Bridge to Long Island City because the tracks down the west side of Manhattan to the yards in back of Penn Station/Madison Square Garden have been torn up in preparation for a new convention center. The circus elephants were shown in an Apr 1 New York Times photo walking thru the Queens-Midtown Tunnel for the first time.....

THE POSTAL SERVICE will honor the 10th Anniversary of Amtrak with this special cancellation applied to mail sent from Chicago Union Station (ZIP Code 60607) on Apr 30 and May 1. The design pictures a Rohr Turboliner.....

RENO FUN TRAIN run of Apr 17 (Easter weekend) was cancelled, apparently because of a shortage of Reno hotel space. Apr 24 will be the last Oakland departure of the train for this season.....

NARP ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Barry Williams had a letter published prominently in the New York Times of Apr 17. Williams said in part, "The Administration's budget proposals seek to encourage auto transportation while gutting Amtrak. It is ironic that an Administration so committed to reducing inflation and strengthening defense would advocate still greater reliance on the private car. Our overdependence on expensive foreign oil, half of which is consumed by autos, is a primary cause of inflation and a significant threat to national security. Congress can save Amtrak. It will, if Americans urge it".....

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UNITED TRANSPORTATION UNION members and other rail unions will join in an Apr 29 "March on Washington" to protest Amtrak and Conrail budget cuts and railroad retirement cuts. The march will start at Union Station at 11am and will proceed to the U.S. Capitol.....

AMTRAK'S SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION of $24.9 million for the current fiscal year was approved by the House Appropriations Subcommittee. The House Budget Committee, reports NARP, is presently aiming at a $792 million Amtrak budget for next year, having rejected a bid to cut it to the $613 million asked for by the Administration. The committee vote was along party lines 17-13 except that Congressman Phil Graham of Texas opposed the higher figure.....

THE SUN BELT rallies to help save the SOUTHWEST LIMITED. A supporters rally was to take place in Flagstaff AZ around mid-April (no other details known), and Senator Domenici of New Mexico planned to meet the westbound SOUTHWEST LIMITED at Albuquerque on Apr 17.....

THE INTER-AMERICAN is to get Superliner cars on Apr 26. This fact is not listed in the new Apr 26 nationwide timetable.....

AMERICAN GASOLINE USAGE has been dropping to the point that there is talk of a "glut" of gasoline. This month, gasoline prices began falling a bit, the first time in half a year. It is forecast that price decreases will not continue beyond Jun 30, however. And a Rand Corporation study done for the Federal Government was released this month; it concludes that further exploration for oil and natural gas in the U.S. will not be nearly as successful as has been believed so far. The study predicts only a 20-40 year supply of petroleum can be produced in the U.S.--far less than Administration energy planners are now estimating.....

4449 STEAM ENGINE will travel from Sacramento to Los Angeles and back in May, as reported last issue. But now we have conflicting reports on the dates. An SP source now informs us that the train will leave Sacramento May 10 to travel to L.A. via the Valley route. On May 13 it will leave L.A. for the return trip via the Coast route, with a stopover in San Luis Obispo the first day. The train will be a "private" SP run, with three cars, and one or two diesels assisting the 4449. A report we got on Apr 8 said that the locomotive was being painted in the SP roundhouse in Portland. Doyle McCormack will be engineer of the 4449.....

"CURRENT BUDGET CUTS," writes history professor Alfred Runte on the Seattle Times editorial page Apr 14, "advanced under the guise of an economy measure, are nothing more than a last-ditch attempt by the DOT to scuttle (Amtrak) once and for all." Runte says that attacking the long distance trains will cause the corridors to "collapse under their own weight once the best and most lucrative routes are eliminated from the system." Long distance routes, he notes, give Amtrak 54% of all its revenues, even tho they carry only 20% of its passengers.....

UNITED AIR LINES will abandon Pendleton, Oregon late in April--one of the many reductions in air service that have accompanied deregulation and high fuel costs. These facts make the trains more necessary than ever. Looking at the buses, we find that Greyhound is advertising a San Francisco to Los Angeles fare, good on some runs on Tues, Wed and Thur, of over half off the regular fare: $24.10 roundtrip compared to the normal $49.08. One-way fares are similarly reduced.....

CHESSIE'S SAFETY EXPRESS steam excursions will get underway soon, starting in the Midwest. On Apr 25 a roundtrip will be made from E. St. Louis, Illinois to Flora, Illinois. Ticket information is available from: Safety Express, Box CJ, 2 N. Charles St., Baltimore MD 21201.....

PARK FOREST, ILLINOIS Star, in its Sunday "Inside" magazine on Mar 29, carried a nice article on one-day excursions that can be done on Amtrak. There were a number of Superliner photos and glowing descriptions.....

ILLINOIS CENTRAL GULF played a big role in the filming of the recently released movie, "Back Roads." The railroad said it took about three days to film one scene, in which actress Sally Field falls from the side of a freight car into a mud puddle. An ICG freight train in Wilmer, Alabama was used in the scene.....

THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY reportedly had its best ridership day yet on Mar 28 when a total of 622 passengers rode the service. About half of the morning's passengers were traveling to Washington State. For the month of March, the daily average was 270 passengers--an all-time high for the train. Supporters of the train are very worried that it will get cut out of the system, and the Governor was talking recently about ending the rail experiment early and cutting its budget out.....

AMTRAK TRAIN 151, the SHORELINER, arrived in New Haven on Apr 7 with an F40 locomotive, three LRC cars, and five Amfleet cars, reports a reader. It left with Conrail GP35 #2295 for power and Amtrak E60 #959 providing head-end power.....

GOVERNOR EDMUND BROWN will preside over dedication ceremonies of the California State Railroad Museum at noon on May 2 in Sacramento. The day will start with a parade thru downtown Sacramento at 9:30. The museum will be open 10am-10pm the dedication week of May 2-10.....

News in this issue is updated thru April 17, 1981.

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT (continued from page 9)

cold. Portland, Oregon remains optimistic that its proposed light rail line along the Banfield Freeway will be approved.

LOS ANGELES OFFICIALS were told by Caltrans director Adriana Gianturco Mar 31 that there are not enough state and federal funds to build the proposed Century Freeway as it was originally planned. The Center for Law in the Public Interest then came forward with support for a proposal to build a light rail line along the freeway right of way instead.

AMTRAK BUDGET IN PERIL (continued from page 3)

*** Kansas City Star editorial (Mar 30):

"There is nothing wrong with trimming federal subsidies to Amtrak which has cost the taxpayers billions since the government went into the rail passenger business. But the proposed Reagan cuts smack more of destroying the system forthwith and apparently with little or no thought of what might be done to salvage at least

a skeleton."

*** (Portland) Oregonian editorial (Mar 28):

"Amtrak's record is one of growing ridership, growing labor productivity, aggressive pursuit of revenue and improved markets. Congress would be wrong to stunt the growth of the nation's rail corporation just as it is beginning to achieve the maturity Congress has asked of it."

★ SILVERTON-DURANGO NARROW GAUGE LINE IS SOLD

(The following is the text of a Mar 26 press release:)

One year before entering its second century of operation, the 45-mile narrow gauge mountain railroad between Durango and Silverton in Southwestern Colorado has become the property of Charles E. Bradshaw, Jr., of Orlando, Florida...

Sale of the historic line with its coal-fired, steam-driven passenger train, the SILVERTON, was closed yesterday (Mar 25) in the Denver headquarters of the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad. In selling what has been known as the Silverton Branch, the D&RGW has divested itself of its last segment of a narrow gauge system that in 1900 extended 1700 miles thru the Rocky Mountain West.

The line will be known henceforth as The Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad Company, Inc., the name of a newly-formed corporation of which Bradshaw is president and chief executive officer. Durango will be operational headquarters. The passenger train will keep its traditional name: the SILVERTON.

Bradshaw and the D&RGW contracted in July 1979 for the sale, subject to action by regulatory authorities. Approval came after public hearings that produced unopposed endorsement by the directly involved communities of Durango and Silverton. Describing it as "a living legend," the new owner said he intends to develop it to its full potential.

Over 100,000 passengers rode the SILVERTON last year when it ran daily from May 24 thru Oct 5. At the peak of the season, seating capacity of two trains daily could not meet the demand for reservations. Next season's schedule will be lengthened by 60 days or more by continuing into late fall, Bradshaw has announced. For the first time ever, the narrow gauge line will engage in a nationwide advertising campaign to attract more passengers. Preparations will include additions to the present fleet of cars and locomotives, refurbishing and expansion of necessary facilities. All improvements will be keyed to early-day designs and pioneer railroading authenticity, Bradshaw said.

As for the railroad operation, two key positions have already been filled. Amos Cordova, for many years D&RGW depot agent, will be Vice President and Treasurer of the new company as well as being in charge of station operations. J. M. Mayer, trainmaster under the Rio Grande, will be Vice President and superintendent of operations, which will also include maintenance. Noteworthy especially to railroad enthusiasts will be the increasing number of operating steam locomotives at the Durango roundhouse, which will be enlarged to accommodate them.

With his purchase, Bradshaw acquired six K-36 and K-37 model, 2-8-2 Mikado type locomotives retired from service on the old narrow gauge system. Larger and more powerful than the three K-28, 2-8-2 engines hauling the SILVERTON in recent years, they have never been used on the Durango-Silverton route. Each locomotive can pull approximately 50% more cars than the 10-car limit of the smaller units.

All six of the acquired locomotives will be restored to service as they are needed for longer or additional trains. Bradshaw, a successful citrus grower in Florida, says his purchase... was prompted by regard for the country's historical treasures, a lifelong interest in steam locomotives, and business challenge...

...Bradshaw alone proved able to meet the D&RGW's criteria as the buyer: He had the acceptance and support of Durango and Silverton, demonstrated his ability and determination to run the line properly, and the $2.2 million cash as required by the D&RGW... Public endorsement prevailed at hearings before the Colorado Public Utilities Commission. The ICC added its approval.

CARS & CONSISTS

*SILVER METEOR, train 87, Lakeland FL Feb 22: engine 334 (F40); cars 1455, 2915 "Pacific Beach", 2440, 4646, 4640, 4713, 4610, 20144 (half Amclub, half coach, used as lounge), 8517. Same, Trenton NJ Mar 8: engine 955; cars 1089, 1409, 2676, 2023, 5427, 5411, 5012, 5016, 3300, 8004, 4466, 5015, 4552, 5677, 5422, 8384, 2927, 2854. Same, Washington Mar 18 (second HEP set): engines 975 (335 & 336 south of Washington); cars 1151, 1617, 2457, 2454, 21046, 4645, 4643, 4648, 4014, 20217, 8518, 3112, 4614, 4005, 4006, 4740, 4717, 2887, 2433.

*Chessie Safety Express, Miami Feb 28: engine C&O 614 (4-8-4); cars SLCA 1 tool car, SLCA 101 dorm, B&O 2 storage/tape recording car, CRR 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 open-window coaches, SSSL 9 "E. M. Frimbo" snack/souvenir car, open-window coaches PCCA 10, CRR 101, PCCA 12, CRR 109, PCCA 14 & 15, CRR 108, air-conditioned coach PCCA 16, B&O 17 safety exhibit car, SLCA 18 parlor car, RPCI 19 observation-lounge. (Abbreviations: SLCA--Steam Loco. Corp. of America; CRR--Clinchfield RR; SSSL--Steam Special Souvenirs, Inc.; PCCA--Passenger Car Corp. of America; RPCI--RR Passenger Cars Inc.)

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 14, Oakland Mar 4: engines 324, 253; cars 1216, Hi-level coach dorm 39917, Superliners 31031, 31027, 34006, 33010 lounge, 38021 diner, 32004 sleeper.

*RENO FUN TRAIN, Reno Mar 22: engines 638, 615; cars dome 9478, 5408, 5414, dome 9479, 5422, dome 9457, 3311, 3334, 5429, dome 9485, 5674, 5691, 5415, 5421.

*ST. LOUIS MULE, train 342, Kansas City Mar 26: engine 303; cars 20045, 21116. Same, Mar 27: engine 241; cars 20045, 21116.

*SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 4, Kansas City Mar 13: engines 288, 622, 289; cars 1206, 1262, Hi-level 39905, Superliner 31001, Hi-level 39953, Superliners 34043, 38007, 32005, deadheads 10602 buffer, 5680, 2673 "Silver Boulder", 2655 "Silver Valley", 2663 "Silver Slope", 2660 "Silver Meadow".

RAIL FANTRIPS

4449 steam excursion and opening of Calif. State RR Museum, Sacramento (May 2-10): contact any of the following for excursion info: Pacific Locomotive Ass'n, 54 Hancock St, San Francisco 94114; Great Western Tours, PO Box 77234, San Francisco 94107; Pacific RR Society, PO Box 2768, Riverside CA 92516; Skyline Travel Service, 563 Granville St, Vancouver, B.C. V6C 1X6. Bay Area Electric RR Ass'n (PO Box 3694, San Francisco 94119) plans roundtrip train May 2 Oakland-Sacto for museum opening day (lv 9am, stop Richmond & Martinez, back 6:30).

May 15: 10th Annual Chicago Railfan Banquet (Railfair '81) by 20th Cent. RR Club. May 16: The Tulip Train, Chicago-Holland MI RT. Banquet $12.50, train $45. Richard Brooks, 8100 S. Rhodes, Chicago IL 60619. Enclose SASE, ck to Unirail.

May 17: 33-day Trans-Siberian Adventure, rail-air-ship, around the world tour. Reservations accepted until Apr 18. $4810 from West Coast. Great Western Tours, PO Box 77234, San Francisco CA 94107. (415) 777-5794.

May 29-31 & Jun 5-7: 2 train/bus tours to Sequoia & Kings Canyon Ntl Parks from S.F. Bay Area. Includes Amtrak SAN JOAQUIN and bus. $155 double, $185 single. Gordon Zimmerman, NRHS, 850 Steiner St, San Francisco CA 94117.

Jul 17-Aug 2: Canadian Experience; incl VIA Rail, tours of Banff, Lake Louise, Jasper Park, cruise Lake Minnewanka, Columbia Ice Field Tractor Tour, cruise "The Caribe". Tracey Rylko, Mystic Valley Rwy Soc, Box 32, Mattapan MA 02126.

One Rail Fantrips listing is free. Send full info to:
RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Fantrips Dept, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

COMING NEXT ISSUE:

The first part of a two-issue series on the Tenth Anniversary of Amtrak--in the Second April issue, due out about May 1. Don't miss these two issues!

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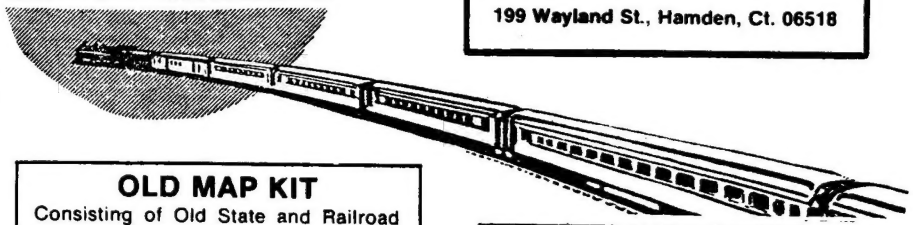

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